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Second Former Bell Councilman Sentenced

Former Bell City Councilman George Cole was sentenced today to 180 days of home confinement and ordered to pay more than \$77,000 in restitution to the city, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Cole, 64, is the second of five former council members to be sentenced in a massive public corruption case that nearly bankrupted the city of 35,000.

Superior Court Judge Kathleen Kennedy also placed Cole on probation for five years and ordered him to perform 1,000 hours of community service. He was ordered to wear a GPS monitor while on home confinement.

Deputy District Attorneys Sean Hassett and Edward Miller with the Public Integrity Division were seeking a four-year prison term.

Jurors in March 2013 convicted Cole of two counts of misappropriation of public funds. In April of this year, he pleaded no contest to one additional count of misappropriation of public funds to avoid a retrial.

Cole, along with former Mayor Oscar Hernandez, former Vice Mayor Teresa Jacobo and former Councilmembers George Mirabal and Victor Bello, were convicted of stealing a total of nearly \$1 million.

Cole was first elected to the Bell City Council in 1984 and served continuously until October 2008. When he was first elected, he earned \$434 a month. Before retiring in 2008, he had made more than \$75,000 in one year for serving on two sham boards the council created – the Surplus Property Authority and the Community Housing Authority.

Sentencing for the remaining three defendants is as follows:

July 25 for Jacobo; July 31 for Hernandez; and Aug. 1 for Bello.

In addition to Cole, two other former Bell officials have been sentenced.

Robert Rizzo, Bell's former chief administrative officer and the leading conspirator, was sentenced April 16 to 12 years in state prison and ordered to repay \$8.8 million in restitution to the city.

A week earlier, Pier' Angela Spaccia, Bell's former assistant chief administrative officer, was sentenced to 11 years, eight months in state prison and ordered to pay more than \$8.2 million in restitution to the city.

The case was investigated by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 73,000 felony defendants and 113,000 misdemeanor defendants.